Ascetism and Incontinence and Dostoevsky's Gift of Tears

Carol Apollonio

> [...] those who have no experience of reason or virtue, but are always occupied with feasts and the like, [...] never taste any stable or pure pleasure. Instead, they always look down at the ground like cattle, and, with their heads bent over the dinner table, they feed, fatten, and fornicate. To outdo others in these things, they kick and butt them with iron horns and hooves, killing each other, because their desires are insatiable. For the part that they're trying to fill is like a vessel full of holes and neither it nor the things they are trying to fill it with are among the things that are.
> (Plato 1992, 257)

> The part that puts its trust in measurement and calculation is the best part of the soul.
> (Ibidem, 274)

1. The Castrate Sectarians

In his 1902 book about the castrate sectarians' (*skoptsy*) Siberian exile, A. Bychkov describes one thriving village, Markha, and attributes its prosperity to the diligence of the *skoptsy*. He also notes a deadness to the village, a lethal boredom and lack of life:

> The wealth of the Markha Skoptsy is particularly striking in comparison with the half-starved Iakuts and their dispersed yurts smeared with clay, which seem to emerge from the earth. [...] But wealthy Markha gives a strange impression on a person seeing it for the first time.
> You can cross the entire village from one end to the other, along all six streets, without seeing a single living soul. [...] nothing moves; there is only deathly quiet. You hear no songs, no children's chatter, no clever jokes. You imagine that life in this wealthy, cozy corner has only momentarily died down and will revive after an hour or two.
> But Markha never comes to life, and even when you find yourself among the Skoptsy inhabitants, you always feel the heavy weight of boredom, lifelessness,

Carol Apollonio, Duke University, United States, carol.apollonio@duke.edu

Referee List (DOI 10.36253/fup_referee_list)
FUP Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (DOI 10.36253/fup_best_practice)

Carol Apollonio, *Ascetism and Incontinence and Dostoevsky's Gift of Tears*, © Author(s), CC BY 4.0, DOI 10.36253/979-12-215-0122-3.08, in Dar'ja Farafonova, Laura Salmon, Stefano Aloe (edited by), *F.M. Dostoevsky: Humor, Paradoxality, Deconstruction*, pp. 81-90, 2023, published by Firenze University Press, ISBN 979-12-215-0122-3, DOI 10.36253/979-12-215-0122-3

> and the solitude of people who know nothing besides the all-consuming devotion to profit. They work for profit, deceive for profit, take no step and utter no word without profit in mind. The craving for profit does not let them sleep. [...] The Skoptsy are always busy and give their workers no rest (Engelstein 1999, 126)[1].

Several elements in this account are memorable: the contrast with the earthen dwellings of the Siberian natives; the deathly silence; the absence of children, music, and humor; the pervasive boredom and solitude; the sense of inertia; and the obsession with work and profit.

The silence of *skoptsy* villages is all the more profound for the absence of drunken peasants, whose songs and carousing are a distinguishing feature of ordinary Russian village life (Engelstein 1999, 141)[2]. *Skoptsy* sobriety and a strong work ethic over the years enabled this orderly folk to establish a level of physical comfort anomalous in the harsh environment of Siberian exile, and in fact to raise the economic level of the community around them. Those who did not farm applied their diligence in "middleman" occupations such as trading and money-changing; photography was also a favored profession (Engelstein 1999: 181-2 and *passim*).

The shape of life in *skoptsy* communities can be seen as the result of a grotesque experiment in which the elimination of sexual passion enabled the creation of a social order based – paradoxically for an ostensibly religious sect – on rational and economic principles. On those grounds, their lifestyle has to be viewed as a resounding success. For Dostoevsky, though, the *skoptsy* way of life joins with his better-known targets – Western communist theories on the one hand and profit-based economic systems on the other – to generate a horrifying dystopia. Like everything in Dostoevsky's poetics, the message is hidden and counterintuitive.

To the reader of Dostoevsky, the village of Markha appears as a kind of weird anti-world. Dostoevsky's novels teem with life. His streets are loud, crowded, and disorderly. Drunkenness, prostitution, and violence are rampant. Filthy, poverty-struck children throng the streets, begging, singing, and crying. No one works. By contrast, Markha is silent, sterile, boring, closed in on itself; the villagers are focused on money, profit, rationality, and order. The *Skoptsy* and Dostoevsky's hedonists leave their mark on the worlds they inhabit. The two worlds offer a clear contrast between two sets of moral values: self-denial and self-indulgence. The *skoptsy* mutilate themselves as they struggle against the temptations of the flesh. Dostoevsky's hedonists give in to their passions and satisfy their bodily appetites. This disposition to yield to temptation actually links the latter (the Svidrigailovs of the world) to the poor, the downtrodden, and the homeless in his works. For these two extremes on the social spectrum, a work ethic based on calculation and deferral of pleasure is meaningless; they plunge into the fullness of life in the here and now.

1 Engelstein's main source here is Bychkov 1902, 47-8.

2 Engelstein here references G. Men'shenin (Меньшенин 1900, 262).

2. Ascetism and Incontinence in Dostoevsky

These two opposing patterns of behavior in response to the problem of fleshy temptation – self-restraint and self-indulgence – represent what we might consider to be *a*, if not *the*, dominant moral puzzle posed in Dostoevsky's novels. Dostoevsky was fascinated by sectarian movements (cf. Morris 1993, Murav 1992, and others), and he even derived the name of his most famous hero "Raskol'nikov" from the words for schism (*raskol*) or schismatics (*raskol'niki*). As for the *skoptsy,* the castrates themselves are a noticeable, if enigmatic, theme in *The Idiot* and make appearances in other works as well, either overtly or in the subtext. Religious extremists figure in all of Dostoevsky's major novels, from the confessing painter Mikolka in *Crime and Punishment* to Makar Dolgoruky in *The Adolescent* and the ascetic monk Ferapont in *The Brothers Karamazov.* In addition to these clearly identified religious dissenters, many of Dostoevsky's major characters – Sonia Marmeladova, Prince Myshkin, Maria Timofeevna Stavrogina, Stinking Lizaveta among them – bear the germ of *iurodstvo* and other borderline spiritualities. It's a very diverse range indeed.

Such a wealth of religious freakishness defies easy categorization. At a minimum, it can be said Dostoevsky's moral system opposes structure, system, reason, and rules on the one hand, to irrationality, spontaneity, emotionality, and blind faith, on the other. These divisions persist among even those religious characters who seek spiritual experience outside the church – the castrates adhere to the former set of values; the painter Mikolka, Stinking Lizaveta, and others, the latter.

Let's agree at the outset that Dostoevsky's ethical system, like so much else in his poetics, is presented in terms of binary oppositions. A distinctive pattern related to sectarianism, notably the castrates' self-denial, can be identified in the writer's treatment of sexuality and, in fact, all forms of fleshy temptation. The great novels feature a dynamic opposition between *asceticism* and its opposite – the sin of *incontinence*. As elsewhere in Dostoevsky's apophatic art, surfaces can be deceiving; what is externally attractive and righteous can mask a source of evil, and sin and squalor may serve as the source for grace.

Dostoevsky's characters align themselves at one or the other end of this opposition. His most compelling protagonists – intellectually driven rationalists and doubters like the Underground Man, Raskol'nikov, and Ivan Karamazov, are ascetics, self-deniers like the Markha *skoptsy*. They are disgusted by self-indulgent, incontinent characters like Marmeladov, Svidrigailov, and Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov. It is in large part this tension that drives the novels' plots, for all of these characters – on both sides of the extreme – face temptation to indulge in the sins of the flesh. And although readers are drawn to the ascetics, I will argue that it is the incontinents who bear Dostoevsky's positive, though hidden, message of faith and redemption.

Asceticism entails a conscious denial of the body's physical needs in the interest of some greater, intangible ideal, traditionally related to religious practice. Self-restraint is a virtue in classical philosophy; social order is maintained by the function of rationality and self-discipline (Plato 1992, 117). In the Russian

context, the goal of ascetic practices was traditionally spiritual, but increasingly in the nineteenth century they became associated with atheistic and revolutionary ideologies (cf. Morris 1993, Matthiewson Jr. 2000). Thus although an ascetic temperament links to sectarianism, it is by no means limited to religious believers. In the case of Dostoevsky's characters, the ascetics are in fact most likely to be atheists or religious doubters.

Dostoevsky's ascetics suffer from a highly developed self-consciousness and a conflicted sense of their own worth. They display a tendency to abstraction and detachment from their physical needs. They are intellectuals, proud, well-educated and isolated from human society. Their physical contact with others is minimal. Their solipsism is echoed and reinforced by an internal split between mind and body. Readers rarely see these characters enjoying a meal, and even if they have a glass of vodka or wine, they never get drunk or lose their self-control. Among the complex factors relevant to an understanding of these characters, the most important one may be the one they share with the *skoptsy:* they refrain from sex.

The dynamic of sexual desire and abstinence plays an instrumental role in the human relationships at the heart of Dostoevsky's ethical system, for contact with the other offers a path out of solipsism. His dramatization of the problem of prostitution or the fallen woman of course begs the question. Both *Crime and Punishment* and *Notes from Underground* generate plot tension from a key encounter between the ascetic protagonist and a prostitute. The question of what "really happened" during the ellipses in *Notes from Underground* (and in fact in any work), though, is by no means easy to answer, despite the assumptions made by the prurient reader. A close reading of the relevant passages in *Notes* allows for the possibility of impotence. The narration of the related scene in *Crime and Punishment* (when Sonya reads the Lazarus text to Raskol'nikov) is even less reticent in its insistence on "*bessilie,*" and in the final version of the text Dostoevsky removes wording implying that they had sex (Apollonio 2009, 74-7). More important than any textual facts, though, is Dostoevsky's care in setting up the opposition between the different value systems, with the protagonist poised between them. In both cases, as with Dostoevsky's other ascetic heroes, presumably admirable manifestations of self-control are the source of the character's misery.

Dostoevsky's over-rational doubters tend to be his most committed ascetics. Furthermore, Dostoevsky's ascetics are as a rule psychologically distressed and prone to demonic visions. The careful reader might even assume that it is their self-denial that brings on the devil. The most prominent examples of this pattern are the monk Ferapont and Ivan Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. My characterization of the opposition in Dostoevsky's work bypasses Nietzsche's famous discussion of ascetics in his *Geneology of Morals*. But it should be said that true Christian believers in Dostoevsky's work – Marmeladov, Grushenka, Dmitry Karamazov, even Sonia Marmeladova and Zosima – are fully embodied creatures, engaged in close contact with other human beings; they are not ascetics, though strong in spirit.

The self-denial of the ascetic contrasts with the self-indulgence of the incontinent, or intemperate, who yields to the demands of the flesh. Aristotle writes in the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

> The habits of Perfect Self-Mastery and entire absence of self-control have then for their object-matter such pleasures as brutes also share in, for which reason they are plainly servile and brutish: they are Touch and Taste (Aristotle 1998, 52).

The fool's tendency to grasp after pleasures is "insatiable and undiscriminating" and can cause the desires to become so "great and violent in degree they even expel Reason entirely" (Aristotle 1998: 55). Building on Aristotle's discussion and on the commentaries of Thomas Aquinas, Dante distributes the sins in the circles of his inferno in three categories of increasing gravity: in the outer, milder circles he locates the sins of incontinence (lust, greed, and anger); here reside the "ravaged spirits" who

> [...] sinned in carnal things –
> their reason mastered by desire (Dante 1994, 49).

The next circle is reserved for those who committed violent sins of passion. Sins of malice (involving fraud and premeditation[3]) are the most grievous, and accordingly are located at the epicenter of hell (see also Nicole Pinsky's notes in Dante 1994, 395 and Singleton 1977, 174-78). The incontinent sins are considered less grave because they result from passion, and the will is in the power of some extrinsic force (Singleton 1977, 178 [Aquinas]) and because they afflict only the sinner himself (*ibid.*, 175 [Aristotle]). Thus those in the outer circle, whose inability to resist a moment of passion landed them in hell, are deserving of pity:

> Don't you recall
> A passage in your Ethics, the words that treat
>
> Three dispositions counter to Heaven's will:
> Incontinence, malice, insane brutality?
> and how incontinence is less distasteful
>
> to God, and earns less blame? (Dante 1994, 113)

In Dostoevsky's novels the opposition between asceticism and incontinence is pervasive. The "battlefield" is the human body, and all the physical appetites are implicated: hunger, thirst, desire for shelter and freedom from pain. Dostoevsky's working title for the novel that became *Crime and Punishment* was *The Drunkards*. As with sexual incontinence, Dostoevsky does not advocate for indulgence in the sin; rather he presents a paradox: the incontinent sinners are actually closer to God than the righteous ascetics. And they are also verbally incontinent – Marmeladov, for example, is a talker. *Crime and Punishment*'s Razumikhin, one of the most positive characters in all of Dostoevsky's works,

[3] Calculation, or *raschyot*, in our language.

is also verbally incontinent; and the attentive reader will note that he drinks to excess and is under the influence of alcohol in almost all his scenes in the novel. He is emotionally incontinent as well, of course, and falls head over heels in love with Raskol'nikov's sister the moment he meets her.

The ascetic characters focus their attention inward, concern themselves with intangible things, are minimally grounded in the life of the flesh, and defer gratification to some future time. Dostoevsky's most memorable example of this mind-set is the German couple in *The Gambler* who defer marriage until they can afford it – at which point they are well past the age of love (ПСС 5, 225-26). At the opposite extreme, the incontinent sinners look outward, crave food and drink, and live fully in the physical world, here and now. Middle-aged lushes occupy the foreground of his novelistic universe: Marmeladov, Captain Lebiadkin, Fedor Pavlovich Karamazov. They drink in underground taverns; they brawl and fornicate. Marmeladov in particular was created to carry the theme of drunkenness.

These incontinent characters are fathers whose seeds bear fruit. Their indulgence of their appetites leaves obvious physical traces: puffiness of face, an excess of flesh, spirited, bloodshot eyes (*«odushevlennye krasnovatye glazki»* – ПСС 6, 12), so the reader is repelled, rather than attracted, by the fullness of their embrace of life. They engage in a perpetual give-and-take with the material world: they eat sweets and drink alcohol and emit fluids and smells: tears, alcohol fumes, sweat, blood, and, ultimately the sweet stink of the body's decomposition. Thus –I trust my readers are following the thread – the elder Zosima represents the inevitable end point in a line of descent that begins with "Seed Son of Sugar Marmelade" (Semyon Zakharych Marmeladov). From Marmeladov comes a taste for sweets that Feodor Pavlovich Karamazov and Zosima share (ПСС 14, 303). Sweets rot Fedor Pavlovich's teeth (*ibid.*, 22), and, we presume, Zosima's body. Marmeladov, first encountered in a filthy underground tavern, is the seed that falls to earth in the Gospel of St. John – and so is Feodor Pavlovich, and so, too, is Zosima. This seed will serve as the author's most profound symbolic expression of the hope of Christian resurrection and redemption. It all begins with the sin of incontinence. Without the sin of incontinence, we live in lifeless, sterile, childless, arid world.

The redemptive potential of the drunk makes an appearance in the culture of Orthodox Russia. The Marmeladov story was influenced by a seventeenth-century folk tale, "The Story of a Drunkard." A drunkard dies and is confronted by saints at the gates to heaven. The drunkard reveals the sinfulness and pride of the saints, and gains entrance. In the story humility turns out to be more righteous than external, by-the-books virtue.

> Рече бражник: «А вы с Лукою написали во Евангели: друг друга любяй. А бог всех любит, а вы пришельца ненавидите, а вы меня ненавидите. Иоанне Богослове! Либо руки своея отпишись, либо слова отопрись!» Иоанн Богослов рече: «Ты еси наш человек, бражник! Вниди к нам в рай». И отверзе ему врата. Бражник же вниде в рай и сел в лутчем месте (*Повесть о бражнике* 1969, 596).

The story shows that the most abject sinner may receive the greatest blessing. One might even suggest that the more incontinent a character, the more likely he is to be open to the mysterious workings of grace (See also Murav 1992, 60-2, citing L. Lotman).

So it is that the ascetic Raskol'nikov, stumbling through the hot, dirty streets of St. Petersburg immediately after his "rehearsal" visit to the old pawnbroker's apartment, descends into a filthy basement tavern. The intense mental strain of the preparations for murder has left him in a state of mental anguish, starving, and thirsty. Raskol'nikov lets down his guard and, unusually for him, orders a beer:

> Он уселся в темном и грязном углу, за липким столиком, спросил пива и *с жадностию выпил первый стакан. Тотчас же всё отлегло, и мысли его прояснели.* «Всё это вздор, – сказал он с надеждой, – и нечем тут было смущаться! Просто физическое расстройство! *Один какой-нибудь стакан пива, кусок сухаря, – и вот, в один миг, крепнет ум, яснеет мысль,* твердеют намерения! [...] *он глядел уже весело, как будто внезапно освободясь от какого-то ужасного бремени* [...] (ПСС 6, 10-1; my Italic, *CA*).

> Раскольников не привык к толпе и, как уже сказано, бежал всякого общества, особенно в последнее время. Но теперь его вдруг что-то потянуло к людям. *Что-то совершалось в нем как бы новое, и вместе с тем ощутилась какая-то жажда людей* (*ibid.*, 11; my Italic).

> Было душно, так что было даже нестерпимо сидеть, и всё до того было пропитано винным запахом, что, кажется, *от одного этого воздуха можно было в пять минут сделаться пьяным* (*ibid.*, 12; my Italic).

Here, and later, in contact with incontinent Marmeladovs, Raskol'nikov becomes temporarily incontinent himself: he takes a drink and allows himself to engage in conversation with another human being. Importantly, at these moments, Raskol'nikov's mind clears and he becomes free of his burden – we presume, his murderous plan. For his part, Marmeladov gives way to verbal incontinence. The story that he tells of his daughter's sacrifice becomes a sermon, a vision, and a promise of future redemption.

The rest of the novel will track Raskol'nikov's initial refusal to accept this alternative of faith and family, the resulting slippage into the brutal act of murder, and his ultimate salvation through that very vision. If Raskol'nikov had stayed with Marmeladov, would he have committed the crime?

The beer is just one fluid that lubricates the action of divine grace. Crucially, bodily fluids – blood, for example – will also serve, and tears. Later Marmeladov's blood will stain Raskol'nikov's coat like a Christian sign of redemption. Thematically echoing the murder of the old woman, it will bring new life, the kiss and trust of an innocent little girl, who will water the murderer with her tears:

> Вдруг тоненькие, как спички, руки ее обхватили его крепко-крепко, голова склонилась к его плечу, и девочка тихо заплакала, прижимаясь лицом к нему все крепче и крепче.
> – Папочку жалко! – проговорила она [...] (ПСС 6, 146).

This pattern, involving verbal and physical incontinence – spontaneous physical gestures of affection, fluids – will operate to communicate a message of divine grace at key plot moments.

Dostoevsky's most notorious incontinents are strongly marked for paternity – which reflects their sexual incontinence. Those who indulge the sins of the flesh bear the seed of life. So we find ourselves in *The Brothers Karamazov*, which presents the culminating encounter between ascetism and incontinence. On the ascetics side are arrayed Ivan Karamazov, Katerina Ivanovna, the Grand Inquisitor, and Ferapont. Sensuality (embodied, for example by Dmitry Karamazov, Grushenka, Captain Snegirev, and Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov) represents the potential for joy, love, and, in Dostoevsky's world, genuine religious experience. The ascetic characters struggle against their natural fleshy desires, which leads to the novel's famous scenes of *nadryv* – emotional outbursts in which the bottled-up desires escape violently from within.

Ferapont is the novel's most obvious ascetic. He bases his religious practice on the mortification of the flesh – the coarse coat and filthy linen shirt, the shackles he wears against his body. He prides himself in everything that isolates him from the community of the other monks – the strict dietary rules he follows, his physical separation from them. Although he claims to be a religious man, he sees only evil and sin – physically manifested for him in the form of his little demon-monsters. Ferapont's vision of Christ is a source of terror, rather than joy:

> Видишь сии два сука? В нощи же и се Христос руце ко мне пристирает и руками теми ищет меня, явно вижу и трепещу. Страшно, о страшно! (ПСС 14, 154).

By contrast, Zosima's is a religion of joy and love. Surrounded by devoted monks and townspeople, he is never alone. His words tell of the mysterious presence of God in the here and now, in the physical world. In this vision, sorrow is an inextricable part of the bonds of love that unite people. The emblem of this joy is, again, incontinent tears. If the peasant women had not loved, they would not now be able to weep.

> И не утешайся, и не надо тебе утешаться, не утешайся и плачь, только каждый раз, когда плачешь, вспоминай неуклонно, что сыночек твой – есть единый от ангелов божиих, оттуда на тебя смотрит и видит тебя и на твои слезы радуется и на них господу богу указывает. И надолго еще тебе сего великого материнского плача будет, но обратится он под конец тебе в тихую радость, и будут горькие слезы твои лишь слезами тихого умиления и сердечного очищения, от грехов спасающего (ПСС 14, 46).

The two visions (ascetic and incontinent) clash, triggered by the "smell of decay" – the manifestation of Zosima's humanity after death. A crowd of gawkers has gathered outside the elder's cell and sets to gossiping about the reasons for this curious turn of events. A consensus begins to gather that the elder brought this on himself through self-indulgence:

> "несправедливо учил; учил, что жизнь есть великая радость, а не смирение слезное", говорили одни, из наиболее бестолковых. "По-модному веровал, огня материального во аде не признавал" – присоединяли другие еще тех бестолковее. "К посту был не строг, сладости себе разрешал, варение вишневое ел с чаем, очень любил, барыни ему присылали. Схимнику ли чаи распивать?" (ПСС 14, 301).

The juice of life flows in Zosima. He eats, enjoys sweets, and drinks tea *sent by ladies*. For him life is a great joy. In the eyes of the crowd – sins of incontinence; for those who choose to believe – keys to transfiguration.

The choice is clear when the ascetic monk Ferapont, crazed and tormented by a life of self-denial, bursts on the scene and begins to exorcise demons only he can see – and which he undoubtedly generated within himself:

> Покойник, святой-то ваш, – обернулся он к толпе, указывая перстом на гроб, – чертей отвергал. Пурганцу от чертей давал. Вот они и развелись у вас как пауки по углам. А днесь и сам провонял [...]
> – Постов не содержал по чину схимы своей, потому и указание вышло. Сие ясно есть, а скрывать грех! – не унимался расходившийся во рвении своем не по разуму изувер.
> – Канфетою прельщался, барыни ему в карманах привозили, чаем сладобился, чреву жертвовал, сладостями его наполняя, а ум помышлением надменным... Посему и срам претерпел... (ПСС 14, 303).

Ferapont represents a distillation of a line of isolated, embittered, cerebral, self-centered, and arrogant Dostoevskian ascetics. These deluded individuals attempt to cheat the cycle of life and death by denying themselves a part in it, and they end up in the lifeless, arid world of the *skoptsy*, alone with their devils.

Implicit in the process is a resistance to the forces of nature. The ascetic village of Markha is peaceful, orderly, neat, rational, and devoted to a ruthless pursuit of profit. It is devoid of human passion and desire. Markha represents, in microcosm, a world that has dispensed with the sin of incontinence. This is the inner world of Dostoevsky's prideful, doubting rationalists. It is a utopia. It is dead, miserable, and unreal. It is barren, and it is a lie. Markha is what remains when human beings rid themselves of the seed, the same sacred seed out of which Dostoevsky's great novel grew.

Opposed to this sterile, bleak vision is Zosima's embrace of humanity and its joys – fleshy and spiritual. It is this vision that inspires Alyosha Karamazov's incontinently erotic epiphany at the end of Book VII of the novel when, renouncing his doubts and mental torment, he climactically releases his bodily fluids (tears) into the feminine-gendered earth, recalling the passage from the Gospel of John that serves as the novel's epigraph:

> Verily, verily I say unto you except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit (PSS 14, 5; Gospel of John 12:24).

The Brothers Karamazov, then, presents two competing visions based on the human response to desire (желание), or, to put it differently, thirst (жажда). In thwarting desire, the *skoptsy*, and their Dostoevskian doubles, the proud ascetics, deny life itself. We incontinents, though, understand why, of all the miracles that Dostoevsky could have chosen for the centerpiece of his novel, he gave us the miracle at Cana and at Mokroe, a glass of wine for the thirsty, and with it, a promise of forgiveness, joy, and grace.

Works Cited

Apollonio, Carol. 2009. *Dostoevsky's Secrets: Reading Against the Grain*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Aristotle. 1998 (1911). *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. from Greek by Drummond Percy Chase. New York: Dover [reprint of London: J.M. Dent & Sons].

Bible, King James Version, https://biblehub.com/kjv/john/12-24.htm (03.03.2023).

Dante [Alighieri]. 1994. *The Inferno*, tr. from Italian by Robert Pinsky, with notes by Nicole Pinsky. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Engelstein, Laura. 1999. *Castration and the Heavenly Kingdom: A Russian Folktale.* Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press.

Matthiewson Jr., Rufus W. 2000. *The Positive Hero in Russian Literature*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Morris, Marcia A. 1993. *Saints and Revolutionaries: The Ascetic Hero in Russian Literature.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Murav, Harriet. 1992. *Holy Foolishness: Dostoevsky's Novels and the Poetics of Cultural Critique.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1887) 1989. *On the Genealogy of Morals, and Ecce Homo*, tr. from German by Walter Kaufmann and Reginal J. Hollingdale, ed. by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage.

Plato. 1992. *Republic*, tr. fron Greek by Georges M.A. Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Singleton, Charles S. 1977. *Commentary* [Vol. 2 of Dante Alighieri. *The Inferno*, tr. from Italian, with a commentary, by Charles S. Singleton, (2nd printing, with corrections)]. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Бычков, Александр. 1902. *Очерки якутской области*, т. 2: *Скопцы в ссылке*. Иркутск: Макушин.

Меньшенин, Гавриил П. 1900. "Ссыльные скопцы в Якутской области." Гос. музей истории религии, ф. 2, оп. 5, д. 273, лл. 1-11 об (cited in Engelstein, Laura. 1999. *Castration and the Heavenly Kingdom: A Russian Folktale*, note 107, p. 260; notes 138-9, p. 262. Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press).

Повесть о бражнике. 1969. В кн. *Изборник (Сборник произведений литературы древней Руси)*, под ред. Александра М. Панченко, 594-96, 779-80. Москва: Художественная литература, https://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/Fiction/drevneruss/brajn.php (03.03.2023).